



MEDIA RELEASE

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YOORROOK JUSTICE COMMISSION ANNOUNCES ROADMAP TO HEARING ELDERS' VOICES

The Yoorrook Justice Commission has today released its *Roadmap to Hearing Elders' Voices* which outlines Yoorrook's journey ahead covering the formal launch, commencement of Elders' truth-telling and first formal hearings.

The Roadmap restates Yoorrook's commitment to hearing from Elders first and foremost, ensuring the historic work of the Commission is guided by, and grounded in, cultural authority. Covering five phases, the Roadmap commences in March 2022, moving through the initial three phases of Community pre-engagement, Yoorrook's formal launch and Elders' Yarning Circles.

The findings from these initial phases will culminate in Yoorrook's first Elders' hearings starting from 26 April.

All five phases of the Roadmap will contribute to the development of Yoorrook's interim report which is due on 30 June.

Professor Eleanor Bourke, Chair of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, spoke positively about this announcement: "Elders voices are paramount. Their voice will underpin truth and justice for First Peoples. By prioritising Elders first Yoorrook will ensure their stories and truths are captured and included as evidence in its final recommendations. The Roadmap provides a clear outline of the Commission's operations moving forward and demonstrates its commitment to putting Elders at the center of this process."

The first phase of the Roadmap is First Peoples Community Pre-Engagement which will begin in March 2022.

Yoorrook's formal launch and ceremonial sitting will take place on 24 March and will mark the formal start of Yoorrook's inquiry and will be grounded in cultural practices.

Following Yoorrook's formal launch, phase three will see Commissioners visit Elders across the State in regional communities. These meetings, titled *Elders' Yarning Circles*, will take place between 28 March and 22 April. The Elders' Yarning Circles present a platform for Elders to provide insights into the process of directly to the Commissioners. Commissioners will also use these visits as an opportunity to go on Country and attend sites of cultural and historical significance.

The Elders' truth-telling process will commence on 26 April and will run until the delivery of Yoorrook's interim report. This will provide opportunities for Elders to speak and determine if they want their stories included in the official public record of the impact of colonisation in Victoria.

Further details of the support available to people participating the process, will be announced at the Commission's launch on Thursday March 24, 2022.

Yoorrook will invite knowledge-offerings and truth telling from all Traditional Owners and First Peoples in the second half of 2022, and from the broader Victorian community after that.

To learn more about the Yoorrook Justice Commission, please visit the website at: <https://yoorrookjusticecommission.org.au/>

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